



UNIVERSITY OF  
**OXFORD**



# **Brno Workshop April 2018**

**Getting Started in EC Funding**  
**Gill Wells**  
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# Horizon 2020 overview



## HORIZON 2020



### Excellent Science (24.4 B €)

European Research  
Council  
(13.1 B €)

Future and Emerging  
Technologies  
( 2.7 B €)

Marie Skłodowska-Curie  
Actions  
( 6.1 B €)

Research Infrastructures  
( 2.5 B €)

### Industrial Leadership (17 B €)

LEIT = Leadership in  
enabling and industrial  
technologies

- ICT
- Nano, new materials
- Biotechnology
- Space

( 13.5 B €)

Access to Risk Finance  
( 2.9 B €)

Innovation in SMEs  
( 0.6 B €)

### Societal Challenges (29.7 B €)

Health  
(7.5 B €)

Food  
(3.9 B €)

Energy  
(6 B €)

Transport  
(6.3 B €)

Climate  
(3 B €)

Inclusive Societies  
(1.3 B €)

Security  
(1.7 B €)

Spreading Excellence (0.8 B €)

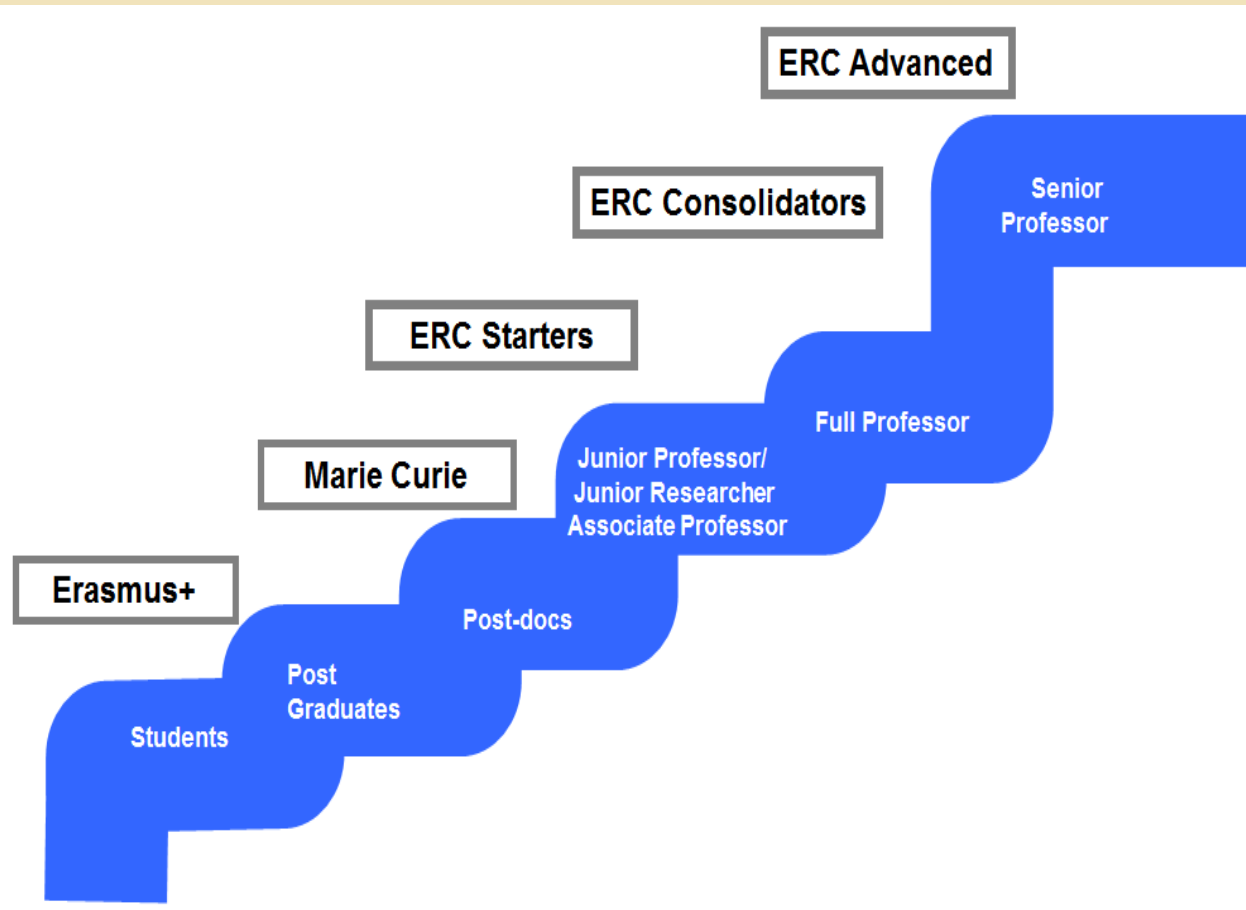
Science for Society (0.5 B €)

EIT (2.7 B €)

JRC (1.9 B €)

Euratom (1.6 B €)

# Making a start



All these schemes are highly competitive and generally difficult to access successfully.

The key is to ensure that, at each stage you are the most 'fundable' applicant you can be.

More usual starting point is as Paid Researcher working on someone else's grant

Easier starting point but less autonomy

Short term security (normally 3 years but, exceptionally up to 5)

Key is to make transition from paid researcher to PI!

# Becoming 'competitive'

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- Understand the context of the funding available
  - All is driven by 'policy' - keep up to date with what is driving agendas
- Know what is coming up and what you are aiming for
  - Utilise funder websites (and internal services)
  - Sign up for relevant newsletters
  - Roadmap documentation (most areas of H2020)
  - Technology Platforms
    - [http://cordis.europa.eu/technology-platforms/home\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/technology-platforms/home_en.html)
- Become indispensable
  - Offer to assist PI in the putting together of EU applications (in return for perhaps being a named researcher on the grant!)
  - Excellent training for large-scale applications as well as helping build contacts (for potential future reference)

# Build your profile

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- Be active in relevant social media
- Negotiate attendance at key workshops & conferences
  - It is always easier to collaborate with someone you have already met!
- Any meeting is a potential networking opportunity
  - Also utilise internal opportunities (workshops, symposia etc)
- Join web-based communities
  - LinkedIn Groups (H2020; Marie Curie etc)
- Take advantage of funding awards for travel/conference attendance etc
  - If there aren't any, then persuade your institution to set one up!
- Make a plan - identify mentors who can help you

# Sources of help

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- There is likely to be a mechanism for supporting EU applications and/or career development at your institution - they should be the first port of call for questions
- Access internal training workshops on key funding schemes - even if you don't think you are ready.
- Many funders offer free training for potential applicants - take advantage
- Help is available whether in industry or academia
- National Contact Points run training events as well as offering advice on applications
- Specialist event for researchers in industry
- Use the Czech EU Liaison Office

# Useful websites

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- **EU Participant Portal**
  - <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html>
- **National Contact Points**
  - [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/national\\_contact\\_points.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/national_contact_points.html)
- **ERC**
  - <http://erc.europa.eu/>
- **Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions**
  - <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/marie-sklodowska-curie-actions>

# Preparing for Individual Fellowships Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions



# Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions

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- “.. Ensure excellent and innovative research training as well as attractive career and knowledge-exchange opportunities through cross-border and cross-sector mobility of researchers to best prepare them to face current and future societal challenges”

# Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions in H2020

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- Operates on a ‘bottom-up’ basis
- Open to all research and innovation domains - from basic research to market take-up
- Mobility is a key requirement
- Aim: develop new knowledge / enhance skills of people behind research and innovation
- Dissemination and public engagement through public outreach activities
- Total budget: €6.2bn (compared with €4.7bn in FP7)

# Eligibility criteria & definitions

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- **Mobility** – At the time of the relevant deadline for submission of proposals researchers shall not have resided or carried out their main activity in the country of their host organisation for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the reference date
- **ER** - At the time of the call deadline (IF) must be in possession of a doctoral degree or have at least 4 years of full-time equivalent research experience
- **Academic Sector** -Includes universities and higher education institutions awarding degrees, non-profit research institutions (public and private), and international European interest organisations
- **Non-Academic Sector** - Includes any socio-economic actor not included in the academic sector (not just business and industry)

# IF Project

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- Completely bottom up - any excellent research project in any research / innovation field
- Calibre of researcher important
- Host institution & Supervisor important too!
- No age or career stage restrictions
- Researcher and host institution work together on application
- Grant **beneficiary** is the host institution
- Grants can exceptionally be portable and flexible
- Expectation of full-time research fellowship but can incl. some supervision, teaching etc.
- Requests for part-time working may be possible during grant negotiation / life-time of grant

# Project Activities

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- ‘Training-through-research’ at the host institution of Fellow’s choice, with named Supervisor
- Realistic and well-defined objectives in terms of research project
- Career advancement, including a Career Development Plan
- Develop and significantly widen the competences of the researcher, including multi-interdisciplinary expertise, transferable skills and inter-sectoral experience
- Optional secondment (should significantly add to the impact of the research project) of up to 3-6 months (in Europe)
- Public engagement and dissemination activities
- Two way knowledge exchange between Fellow and Supervisor (need to show both!)

# How to apply

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- Host organisation ('Supervisor' or other 'Contact') or the Fellow registers the draft proposal
  - PIC code
  - Draft acronym, draft summary, choice of panel
  - Involve the Department and EU Support team at Host Institution &
- Supervisor, other Contact or Fellow give each other access onto the proposal
- Proposal is completed
  - Administrative forms ('Edit forms')
  - Part B ('Download template' and 'Upload')
- Proposal is submitted by the Supervisor or other Contact at the host organisation
- Submission system checks ('Validate forms' and 'Print preview')
- 'Submit' as many time as required until the deadline

# Proposal

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- **PART B**
  - addresses the evaluation criteria
  - Becomes Annex I - Description of Action or the Grant Agreement
- **Structure of Part B for IF:**
  - Cover Page, Table of Contents
  - List of Participants
  - Summary
  - Excellence
  - Impact
  - Implementation

**10 pages**
- CV of the Researcher (max 5 pages)
- Capacities of the participating organisations (1 page beneficiary, 0.5pages partner(s))
- Ethical aspects
- Letters of commitment of partner organisations (GF only)

# Evaluation Criteria

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## EXCELLENCE

- Quality and credibility of the research action (level of novelty, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary and gender aspects)
- Quality and appropriateness of the training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the Host
- Quality of the supervision and of the integration in the team/institution
- Capacity of the researcher to reach or re-enforce a position of professional maturity/independence

## IMPACT

- Enhancing the potential and future career prospects of the researcher
- Quality of the proposed measure to exploit and disseminate the action results
- Quality of the proposed measure to communicate the action activities to different target audiences



# Evaluation Criteria

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## IMPLEMENTATION

- Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan
- Appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
- Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures, including risk management
- Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure)

## IN ADDITION

- Gender aspects - in the research content as well as training
- Ethics (Section 7 of Part B)
  - Crucial for all research domains - to identify any potential ethical issues and describe how they will be addressed
  - All proposals considered for funding subject to Ethics Review

# Approaching the proposal writing

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- Work with your Supervisor / Fellow
- Keep the Guide for Applicants in front of you
- Treat the criteria as examination questions
  - It may feel repetitive - addressing issues from different angles
- Think about your evaluators
  - Clearly address the main objectives
  - Use clear and concise language
  - Explain country specific jargon
  - Provide them with the evidence they need
- Find 'critical friends' to review

Highly competitive - threshold is 70% but in reality you will need 90%+

## Final thoughts ....

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- Become competitive
- Build your profile
- Plan ahead and be tough with yourself
- Make sure you are ready and give yourself the best chance of success
- Get help from your current and proposed host institutions
- Seek a mentor and critical friends
- Don't despair - keep going
- The experience will be invaluable and one day you will succeed!